

**COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM**  
**CONGRESSMAN TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN**



**NEWS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**  
**December 9, 2003**

**Contact: Bob Dix**  
**(202) 225-6751**

**Davis, Putnam Acknowledge Federal Computer Security Progress**  
*Improvement Still Too Slow, Much Work Remains to Be Done*

**WASHINGTON** – Today, the Government Reform Subcommittee on Technology Information Policy, Intergovernmental Relations and the Census released the 2003 Federal Computer Security Report Card.

This is the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of the scorecard process, which was started by former subcommittee Chairman Stephen Horn (R-CA). This year's scorecard is based on new reporting requirements under the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA), legislation authored by Committee Chairman Tom Davis (R-VA). Agency and Inspector General reports were transmitted to the Office of Management Budget in September.

"The Federal Government should be the standard bearer when it comes to information security. Unfortunately, today's report card indicates anything but that. The Federal Government – overall -- scored a D. While that's an improvement over last year's F, it's nothing to be proud of and much more must be done to secure our government computer networks," said Subcommittee Chairman Adam H. Putnam (R-FL).

"I want to commend Chairman Putnam for continuing to shine a light on this important issue," Davis said. "The overarching goal of FISMA was to force the federal government to put its house in order and become a reliable partner in the protection of our information highways. The grades we released today indicate that while some rooms in that house are tidier, too many others are not. Agencies like NRC and NSF deserve credit for making marked improvements to their security and receiving an A grade."

Chairman Putnam added, "One of the most disturbing findings is that 19 of the 24 agencies reviewed had not completed an inventory of their mission critical systems. Obviously, an agency can't ensure its systems are secure if it can't account for all of its mission critical systems. Everything starts with the inventory, and this aspect must improve -- and improve quickly."

Added Chairman Davis, "I'm deeply concerned that too many agencies have not yet responded to FISMA's requirements; for example, the fact that 79 percent of agencies don't even have accurate system inventories casts doubt over the entire reporting process."

“The Subcommittee is committed to ensuring that all our networks, both private, and public are secure. The threat is real and the loss to the economy in terms of dollars has already been significant. There is also the real danger of loss of life that could result from a cyber attack. We can and must do better,” concluded Chairman Putnam.

“While we're making progress, it's important to note that we're still at a point where information security is not being taken seriously by *every* agency and department. Clearly, our goal of making computer security a constant management focus has not been met. Chairman Putnam and I are committed to changing this dangerous dynamic,” concluded Chairman Davis.

To view the full report card go to <http://www.reform.house.gov/tipirc/>. Click on Hearings.

###